

- Three Bills will Increase Benefits, Protect Homes, and Assist Homeless Vets -

Washington, DC - U.S. Rep. John Hall helped pass three important bills that will provide significant benefits for local veterans, as well as active duty servicemen and servicewomen. The first increases veterans' benefits with a cost of living allowance (COLA). The second bill provides new funding for programs serving homeless veterans. The third bill extends until 2016 the assistance programs designed to help service members and veterans maintain ownership of their homes. All three bipartisan bills passed the House this week with unanimous consent. Congressman Hall serves as Chairman of the House Veteran Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA), which oversees veterans' benefits.

The Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act (H.R. 4667) will ensure that veterans are eligible for an increase in benefits through a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) this year. It will impact five different types of compensation – Wartime Disability Compensation, Veterans Clothing Allowance, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation to Surviving Spouses and Children, and other types of Wartime Compensation. The bill is intended to help the more than three million disabled veterans and their survivors who currently receive these types of benefits. Thanks to Congressman Hall's leadership, this bill went smoothly through committee and directly to the House floor.

"I'm pleased to be an original cosponsor of this bill. When you talk to veterans in the real world, they will tell you they are paying more for food, gas and especially healthcare and prescription drugs," Rep. Hall said. "We made a solemn promise to the men and women who sacrificed for our country. We cannot pinch pennies at their expense."

The Helping Heroes Keep Their Homes Act (H.R. 3976) seeks to prevent active service members and their survivors from losing their homes. It extends until 2016 mortgage foreclosure protections for service members which were scheduled to expire. Especially important are protections for the surviving spouses of service members who die in battle.

The End Veterans Homelessness Act (H.R. 4810) provides a \$50 million increase, from \$150 million to \$200 million, in funding for comprehensive service programs for homeless veterans, while introducing needed reforms. Rep. Hall was also an original cosponsor of this bill. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has committed to ending homelessness amongst veterans in five years. These bills will give the VA critical resources to achieve that goal.

"We must do all we can to ensure that our service men and women will never lose their homes," Hall said. "We must also offer them the peace of mind to know that should they wind up making the ultimate sacrifice for their country, their families won't lose their home in addition to losing their loved one. And to those who come home safely, but wind up homeless – we owe them the opportunity to find safe, affordable housing, and whatever resources they need to lead productive lives."